

# TALA AT RSAC INNOVATION SANDBOX: THREATS TO CYBERSECURITY



The RSA Innovation Sandbox was a fantastic shot in the arm for Tala, for many reasons - not least that we got to go on stage in front of our industry peers to talk about one of the most important and growing threats to cybersecurity: web application and client-side vulnerability. This threat exposes enterprises and their web applications to attacks at an unprecedented scale.

Following our presentation, there was a massive infusion of interest in Tala, all coming directly from the Sandbox event. We built up so much momentum, we would have loved for that to continue - and it did, until the COVID-19 crisis hit.

## Empathy and Engagement are Powerful Tools

A global crisis like this puts many things in perspective. Tala's team is global; we have colleagues across the United States, as well as India and Ireland and our thoughts are with everyone impacted by this pandemic.

As CEO, I took an early decision that empathy and communication would be key to managing our way through the emergency. Tala is blessed with an outstanding team of employees and we're also fortunate to have a fantastic base of customers and prospective customers. When the crisis hit, we laid out a clear, concise message that we were going to accelerate our interaction with each other. Nothing will ever beat face-to-face communication, but we took a conscious decision to engage frequently with our employees; everyone is stressed, people have families to take care of and many of us are experiencing lock-downs, which adds to that stress. We launched a daily lunch pow-wow with no specific agenda other than connecting, a weekly all-hands meeting and basically looked for ways to talk to each other more often, in a relaxed way (see attached photos of our team calls).

Thanks to this approach, we've been able to maintain a communicative environment where our employees are able to go above and beyond for each other and for our customers. We continue to innovate and address customer priorities in an efficient way, no matter where we're working from. We've adopted an 'all hands on deck' approach to POCs and pilots, ensuring that these go as well as they always have - it's really working out for us. Things are operating smoothly despite working in new ways, and we continue to meet the success criteria demanded by customers and exhibited by our team.

## Back to Business – for Cybercriminals

From a cybersecurity perspective, COVID-19 has had some very interesting side effects. There's been a massive surge in online shopping and, because Tala is in the business of protecting websites, web applications and online transactions, we've witnessed a rapid advancement in the threat landscape.

The boom for e-commerce is, unfortunately, a bonanza for cybercriminals too. Over the past couple of months, we've seen high-profile attacks on well-known global brands, like NutriBullet, True Fire and Tupperware, along with British hardware chain Robert Dyas; 19 SMB websites were attacked during this period, no business is too small to not be targeted.

What we're seeing now is that attackers have developed new techniques to evade detection and mitigation. For example, iframe-based protections, relied on by a great many payment processors, have been defeated by savvy attackers that succeeded in replacing intended iframes with malicious iframes to extract payment data.

Ultimately, the interesting thing hasn't been just the significant move to e-commerce, but our reliance on it. Currently, less than 2% of website operators deploy security policies capable of preventing these attacks. It has never been more important to take a proactive approach to protecting your website and customers' personal and financial data from attackers like Magecart.

## Learning in Difficult Times

As a CEO, the greatest takeaway for me has been that, despite the fact that these are exceptionally difficult times for everyone, people are what matters most. Working with colleagues to help steer our company, we've always kept a clear focus on our people; treating everyone with respect and empathy has given us a solid base to build from. We've been able to stay motivated, continue to bring our enthusiasm to customer relationships and embrace the fantastic opportunities in our sector.

Keeping communications open has helped us stay excited about the future and given us the tools to come out of this stronger. As Irish poet Seamus Heaney put it, 'If we winter this one out, we can summer anywhere.'